

rhododendron leaf. The idea of a caterpillar which could control this invasive alien was very exciting and I was delighted when a strange moth emerged on 19 April. My difficulties in naming the specimen were resolved when a friend suggested it might be a female *Diurnea fagella*. The caterpillar of this common species usually feeds on trees, such as beech, and pupates on the ground among leaf-litter. It appears that this particular individual fell from the canopy to land on the rhododendron leaf. Whether it then spun its cocoon in the belief it had reached ground level, or whether it ate some of the leaf and thus altered its usual behaviour is difficult to say. In either case the rhododendron will continue to thrive!

I thank the Nature Conservancy Council for permitting the visit to Swanton Novers. I am also indebted to Michael Hall for suggesting an identity for the specimen which is now in this museum's collections. — A. G. IRWIN, Castle Museum, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 3JU.

INSECTS NOT IN A MOLE'S NEST. — ON 16 May 1981, while searching under stones in a small dry ditch alongside of a sandy track near Maidcross Hill, Cambridgeshire, I uncovered a single histerid beetle which recently proved to be *Grammostethus* (*nee Hister*) *marginatus* (Erichson). Until 1907 *G. marginatus* was considered a very rare beetle, but after Joy's researches in animal and bird nests (1906, *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* 42: 198) it was subsequently found in a mole's nest (Footnote, 1907, *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* 43: 63) and is now known to be widespread in them. The discovery of my specimen would only be of passing interest as an example of a specialised insect occurring in an unusual place, but for the fact that I had seen another mole's nest insect earlier the same day. At Wicken Fen, the flea *Histrichopsylla talpae* (Curtis) was rather plentiful in heaps of cut sedge refuse. In mid-May, the young moles have only just been born, and the nest is in its prime for the insects that live in it. It seems rather odd that it should be just at this time that these two unrelated but co-habiting specialised insect species should both be taken away from their normal habitat. — RICHARD A. JONES, 29 Dean Road, Willesden Green, London, NW2 5AB.

LARVAE OF MIGRANT HAWK-MOTHS IN KENT. — On 3 September 1984, a larva of the Convolvulus Hawk-moth, *Agrius convolvuli* L., was brought to me. It had been found crawling across a garden lawn at East Malling and it went down into peat the following day. A search of an area of bindweed at the side of the lawn revealed frass but no more larvae. During the previous week eight mature larvae of the Death's-head Hawk-moth, *Acherontia atropos* L., were found feeding on potato foliage at Aylesford. — M. A. EASTERBROOK, 26 Orchard Grove, Ditton, Maidstone, Kent.